



# CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** September 18, 2007

**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**FROM:** Water Resources, Public Works Department

**SUBJECT:** Approval Of Vendor For Landscape Maintenance At El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council:

- A. Find it in the City's best interest to approve Valley Crest Landscape Maintenance, Inc. (Valley Crest), as the vendor for the landscape maintenance at the El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant (El Estero), without bids, as authorized by Municipal Code Section 4.52.080 (k) ; and
- B. Authorize the General Services Manager to award purchase order contracts to Valley Crest for such services, as needed, for Fiscal Years 2007-2011.

### DISCUSSION:

Landscaping at El Estero has been designed as a demonstration garden that shows a variety of plants that thrive when irrigated with recycled water. Different areas throughout the El Estero grounds contain plants from four continents, and landscape maintenance for this diverse plant population requires specialized knowledge and training.

Valley Crest has maintained the recycled water demonstration garden for several years. During this time, staff has worked with Valley Crest staff to help them develop the necessary knowledge to maintain the diversity and beauty of this recycled water demonstration garden. Valley Crest has demonstrated the specialized knowledge, skill set and level of service necessary to maintain a healthy and thriving landscape. Water Resources staff would like to continue this successful working relationship.

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REVIEWED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ Finance \_\_\_\_\_ Attorney

Agenda Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

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September 18, 2007

Page 2

Section 4.52.080 (k) of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code authorizes Council to purchase supplies, equipment and services without complying with the formal bid procedure when it is found to be in the best interest of the City. Valley Crest is fully qualified to do this work, as evidenced by their past performance. The original landscape maintenance contract was awarded to Valley Crest as part of the City's bidding process.

In addition to their established and excellent working relationship with El Estero, Valley Crest each year submits a fee schedule to the City's Purchasing Division to compare its prices with other landscape maintenance companies' fee schedules, and they consistently are competitive with other landscape maintenance companies. Staff recommends that Council approve Valley Crest as the best source of labor to ensure the recycled water demonstration garden's integrity.

**FISCAL/BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

The \$45,000 annual expense for landscaping is included in the approved budget for the Wastewater Fund.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:**

Increasing recycled water use in the City offsets the demand for potable water. By providing a beautiful, well maintained demonstration garden at El Estero, the City is providing an educational tool for users of recycled water to determine which plants will thrive on recycled water and therefore maximize the use of landscaped areas that are irrigated with recycled water.

**PREPARED BY:** Rebecca Bjork, Wastewater Systems Manager/AWJ/mh

**SUBMITTED BY:** Anthony J. Nisich, Public Works Director

**APPROVED BY:** City Administrator's Office